

MEMO

TO: Attorneys Practicing in the Second Judicial Circuit

FROM: Vicki J. Snelgrove
Chief Administrative Judge

RE: Operation of the Court

By this time, I am sure that all of you have read the Order of Chief Justice Beatty regarding the issue of in-person hearings starting January 11, 2021. If you have not, I invite you to go to the Judicial Branch's website and read this Order.

We intend to follow that Order in this circuit as closely as possible.

1. From this point until further Order, all child support enforcement hearings are cancelled.
2. All trials are continued until further Order. If you believe that we can try your case(s) using the virtual courtroom, please send an email copying opposing counsel with ideas on how you think we can do that. If the case is an Aiken case please send the email to Heidi Wilbanks and Toni White. If the case is a Barnwell case, please send the email to Lissa Black and Linda Wiles. If the case is a Bamberg case, please send the email to Lynda Roberts and Toni White. Judge Abstance and I are willing to make every attempt to resolve as many cases as we can, and we are more than willing to hear your ideas.
3. Orders of Protection- the Chief's order says that only the emergency Orders of Protection may be conducted in person; therefore, we will return to conducting the non-emergency cases virtually.
4. Rules to Show Cause- Starting next week, Judge Abstance and I will review the pending Rules to Show Cause to see if there is any way to go forward on those virtually, possibly conduct virtual pretrial/status conferences, or perhaps even refer them to mediation.

We fully realize that this is a horrible inconvenience to your clients and yourselves. However, we call on all of you to be as creative as possible in assisting your clients in solving their problems. We will continue to conduct motion hearings virtually, receive packets on uncontested matters, and hold status conferences on those matters where you think our input can help you resolve matters. We thank you for your hard work and cooperation during this extraordinarily difficult time.